

Westall Secondary College Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy



To be read in conjunction with:
Student Engagement Guidelines

Principal: David Tyson
School Council President: Greig Donnelly
This policy was ratified by School Council in September 2014

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School Profile Statement

Westall Secondary College is located in the south east of Melbourne. It is 30 minutes from the Melbourne Central Business District and five minutes from Monash University's Clayton campus, in a changing demographic area. The school has approx. 510 students, comprising students drawn from the local area and the international community. The College is a well-established, co-educational, government school which enrolls students from year 7 to 12. The College has a diverse linguistic and cultural population.

Our programs at Westall Secondary College are designed to encourage the highest standard of achievement in everything our students undertake. The College is committed to excellence through the Victorian Certificate of Education and consistently ranks highly in state academic achievement levels each year. The College emphasis in junior years is on core competencies of literacy, numeracy, the arts and the use of learning and information technologies across all subjects in the curriculum. Extensive course and career counseling with a rich range of subject electives provide new experiences in years 9 and 10 so that informed choices can be made for VCE and beyond. Academic rigor, initiative and self-discipline are central to life in the school, with shared goal of achievement between staff and students, inspiring the whole College.

Helping our new students to feel happy, secure and confident is an important priority for all Westall staff and to their personal development. The friendly and supportive atmosphere at Westall is underpinned by a strong code of conduct, a distinctive uniform policy, firm structures and clear expectations. Student development embraces academic progress, the building of character, self worth and sense of community. We celebrate our top VCE results but what really matters to us at Westall is that all of our students graduate as confident, well educated young adults, well prepared to take charge of their own future.

Westall Secondary College is proud to be an accredited provider of education for international students. The College values its harmonious diversity of cultures, which enriches the life of the whole school. The College also has a federally funded English Language Centre on site, which provides intensive ESL (English as a Second Language) to newly arrived students. This program caters for refugees, migrants and fee paying students.

Whole-school prevention statement

Westall Secondary College aims to create a safe and supportive environment for learning and behaviours that reinforce school values. Westall Secondary College Community Values will help to build supportive relationships, safe environments and promote positive mental health and well-being for all students.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at Westall Secondary College under any circumstances.

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VALUES

The College Community of students, parents/carers and staff is committed to the following values:

Care for yourself- Personal Worth

Every individual matters. All members of the college community are encouraged to display positive behaviours that contribute to their educational, physical, social and emotional development.

Care for Others- Respect and Courteous Relationships

The basis of all interactions within the College is the belief that all individuals, staff, students and parents have the right to be treated respectfully in a safe learning environment.

Care for your School – Respect your Environment

The College is committed to the provision of a learning environment that is safe, attractive and appropriate to its function.

Care for your Learning - Strive for Excellence

All individuals can learn and work towards achieving their full potential. The College is committed to providing engaging curriculum that will assist individuals in successfully achieving their goals within and through education.

COLLEGE AIMS

Westall Secondary College strives to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and extra curricula activities in addition to a safe and supportive environment, in order to better engage students and improve their outcomes.

AIMS	STRATEGIES
<p>1. Interpersonal Skills <i>Encourage and support the personal growth of the individual and develop students to value learning</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Program, • Leadership program(SRC, peer support, House Captains) • Form Assemblies, • celebrate success, • celebrate cultural differences, • Scrum Nation/Bridge Church, • Theatrical Companies, • Motivational Speakers, • Study Skills
<p>2. Academic <i>Assist students to achieve their full academic potential</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build literacy capacity across the College. • Develop whole school curriculum approach based on Principles of Learning and Teaching and VELs • Student Snippet Meetings, • Case Conferencing • Follow up attendance, Work and conference with class teacher, Modify learning plans, Set goals, and Conduct diagnostic testing, Parent/Teacher interviews, Restorative Practice, Staged

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	response integration program.
<p>3. Welfare & Wellbeing <i>Provide ongoing support for the students' welfare and wellbeing needs</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex education, Camps on Mental Health, Link with community organisation (Leadership Starlight – Cambodian, Muslim, Pacika) • Identify special needs, Refer to SWC for followup, Modify learning plans, Set goals, Implement programs based on needs, SSO – Network – Counsellor • Pregnancy, Attendance, Smoking, Bullying
<p>4. Extra Curricular <i>Provide a wide range of academic, sporting and social activities aimed at developing the whole person</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a culture of student involvement and participation within the school environment • Health Programs, Leadership Program (SRC, Peer Support), Camps Mental Health, Craft club, Sports Coaching,
<p>5. Career Pathways <i>Provide clear direction and preparation for career pathways which include opportunities to access industry training and experience whilst studying at Westall.</i></p>	Career Education Office, MIPS
<p>6. Life Long Learning <i>Develop a positive work ethic and work skills that will hold students in good stead both at school and in the future</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework Club, Theatrical companies, Motivational Speakers, Study Skills, • Follow up attendance, Behaviour Management, Alternative settings e.g. Myuna Farm
<p>7. Professional Learning <i>Develop a collaborative learning culture through establishment of Professional Learning Teams, peer teaching, coaching and joint professional development</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a whole-school Professional Development focus on Learning and Teaching in line with establishment of Performance and Development Culture processes • Professional Learning, Coaching

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PROGRAMS

- Leadership skills
- Relationship Building/Resilience
- Conflict resolution/problem solving
- Vocational/Transitional
- Belonging – connectedness
- Restorative Practice
- Health/Wellbeing promotion.

Westall Secondary College provides educational pathways for students in both the traditional academic areas and vocational areas while providing students with a broad range of extra curricula activities ensuring the needs of all our students are catered for. Extensive welfare support is also provided to enable students to cope with social and personal issues.

Westall Secondary College key improvement strategies focus on raising levels of learning and student wellbeing through a process of prioritizing student needs.

Rights and responsibilities

Guiding principles

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

Equal Opportunity

The *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

Westall Secondary College is committed to eliminating discrimination at all levels.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:

- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The Charter outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The Charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the Charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The Charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees, to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services:

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and reputation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- Cultural Rights

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All DEECD employees must comply with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. At Westall Secondary College we:

- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and
- Respect and promote human rights

Students with disabilities/health issues

The Disability Standards for Education 2005 clarify and make more explicit the obligations for schools and the rights of students under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

Westall Secondary College will make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate students with disabilities/health issues to ensure participation in education and training on the same basis as other students

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, Westall Secondary College will take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

Westall Secondary College will ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The College should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The College may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the college, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

The DDA and the Education Standards do not require changes to be made if this would impose unjustifiable hardship to a person or organisation.

Westall Secondary College works within the DEECD guidelines and the Charter of Human Rights and endeavour to advocate for, support and integrate students with disabilities/health issues/conditions. (Reference 4)

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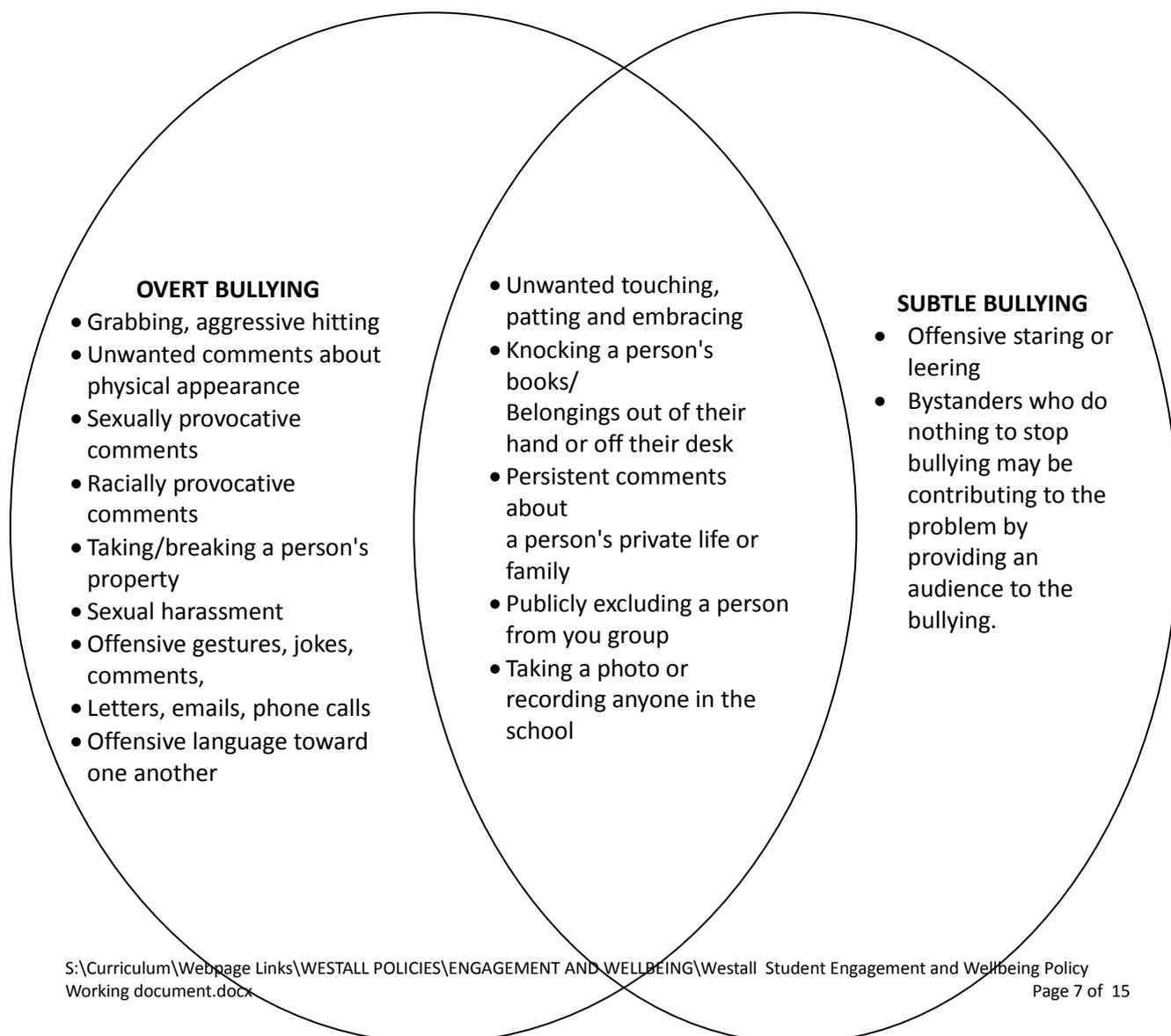
Bullying and Cyber bullying

All members of the WSC Community have the right to a safe and supportive environment free from bullying.

It is the College Community's responsibility to address and deal appropriately with all bullying behaviours.

Bullying occurs when someone, or a group of people, upset or create a risk to another person's health and safety - either psychologically or physically - or their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking or instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS) which could involve text or images.



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Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

The school community consists of teachers, support staff, students and parents/carers. It is imperative that all members of the school community work together to ensure the wellbeing of students is maintained.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be treated fairly, equally and respectfully by the school community • work and learn in a secure and supportive environment. • participate fully in the school’s educational program in order to develop their talents, interests and ambitions. 	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote school values and rules. • participate fully in the school’s educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community. • Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students. • As students’ progress through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these goals.

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Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>To be treated fairly, equally and respectfully by the school community.</p> <p>Parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged</p>	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote school values and rules. • Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modeling positive behaviours. • Ensure their child's regular attendance • Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning. • Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Teachers have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be treated fairly, equally and respectfully by the school community • expect that they will be able to work and learn in a secure and supportive environment • be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student 	<p>Teachers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promote school values and rules. • Read and understand the student engagement and wellbeing policy • Implement the student engagement and wellbeing policy in a fair, reasonable and consistent manner • Know how students learn and how to teach them effectively. • Know the content they teach. • Know their students. • Plan and assess for effective learning. • Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments. • Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning. • Develop individual learning plans for students identified with learning and/or behaviour difficulties

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Shared expectations

Westall Secondary College shares high expectations for the whole school community; Principal class, teachers and school staff

Westall Secondary College has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that:

- Ensures all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, can engage effectively in their learning and experience success.
- Staff will endeavor to incorporate Westall Secondary College's values into all aspects of their practice.
- Staff will take into account learning needs and abilities by differentiating their curriculum to give all students the opportunity to succeed.
- Teachers, coordinators and the principal class will develop positive relationships with parents in order to keep them informed about student progress and development.
- The college will endeavour to develop strong community partnerships that celebrate diversity and benefit the students, the college and the community.
- The college will provide appropriate support services recognising student and community diversity with a focus on student wellbeing.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are expected to support student learning and wellbeing by:

- Engaging in their child's education, actively communicating with college staff and promoting Westall Secondary College's values.
- In cases of student absence, ring the college or provide a written note or medical certificate, explaining the absence, to the relevant Year Level Coordinator.
- Monitoring their student's school work through the school diary. The school diary should also be used as an additional tool for communication with college teaching staff.

Students

- Students should, with support, be expected by their parents/carers and their school to participate fully in the school's educational program and attend regularly.
- Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.
- Students are expected to promote school values and respect the educational, social, emotional and physical development of others by not engaging in behaviours considered to be harassment, bullying or cyber bullying.

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School actions and consequences

Westall Secondary College promotes actions and processes which are fair, consistent, have an educational focus, allow students to retain their dignity and do not isolate students from learning. Prevention and early intervention strategies are used to minimize inappropriate behaviour and irregular attendance.

Student engagement, regular attendance and positive behaviours are supported through relationship based whole-school and classroom practices, including:

- establishing predictable, fair and democratic classrooms and school environments
- ensuring student participation in the development of classroom and whole school expectations
- providing personalised learning programs where appropriate for individual students
- consistently acknowledging all students
- empowering students by creating multiple opportunities for them to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making
- providing physical environments conducive to positive behaviours and effective engagement in learning
- emphasis on positive consequences when students meet high expectations

Inappropriate behaviours, including irregular attendance, will be responded to through a staged response, including:

- understanding the student's background and needs
- ensuring a clear understanding of expectations by both students and teachers
- providing consistent school and classroom environments
- Scaffolding the student's learning program.
- developing individual learning plans and communicating on regular basis with parent
- Broader support strategies will include:
 - involving and supporting the parents/carers,
 - involving the student wellbeing coordinator, managed individual pathways or careers coordinators
- tutoring/peer tutoring
- mentoring and/or counseling
- convening student support group meetings – the student support group is an important component of the staged response for students facing difficulty with engagement, attendance or behaviour
- developing individualised flexible learning, behaviour or attendance plans
- providing broader educational programs, for example experiential learning, work education, camps/outdoor education/creative arts
- involving community support agencies.

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Discipline procedures

At Westall Secondary College we support every student in developing positive behaviours and to abide by the College values.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in all Victorian schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at Westall Secondary College under any circumstances.

- Consequences for inappropriate behaviour are discussed with students and are clearly displayed in every classroom. (Appendix 1)
- A Targeted Staged Response approach (Appendix 2) will be followed.
- As part of the stage response process, a support group, which includes the student well being coordinator, the appropriate year level coordinator and the Student Services' Assistant Principal, is formed to assist individual students who consistently fail to uphold the College values.
- A student may only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action in response to the student's behaviour.
- The College endeavors to use restorative practices. Restorative practice promotes awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002) and is concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).
- The building of relationships is of vital importance and classroom teachers will drive the strengthening of positive relationships between individuals and the class as a whole. All members of a class will have input in developing a set of class rules/expectations.
- Discussion between teacher and student(s) will occur at an appropriate time to establish what the issue is, why there is a problem and how it can be resolved. Student(s) must understand how their behaviour is inconsistent with the agreed class rules/expectations.
- Mediation between student(s) and everyone involved will be organized by the YLC and SWC.

If inappropriate behaviour continues, the following consequences may occur:

Detention - teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake additional or new work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work. Where students are required to undertake after school detentions, the time should not exceed forty-five minutes and parents must be informed at least a day in advance.

Where family circumstances are such that the completion of after-school detention would create undue hardship (for example, where students regularly supervise younger siblings in the absence of parents/carers) the school may choose to negotiate alternative disciplinary measures with parents/carers.

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Limit of classroom privileges such as internet access.

Withdrawal from class: if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of a teacher to teach a class.

In more severe cases, "**in-school suspensions**" may occur and should focus on encouraging students to exhibit positive behavior, learn conflict resolution skills and have an appropriate educational focus. Parents/carers should be informed of such withdrawals.

External suspensions may occur if student behaviour is such that they are putting the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves, staff or other students at significant risk. A Student Absence Learning Plan must also be developed and a post-suspension support group meeting will be scheduled.

Expulsion from a school is the most serious consequence open to the Principal. When considering suspension or expulsion, schools are required to follow the procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published Student Engagement Guidelines.

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The Role of School Council

The responsibilities of school council include:

- The role of school council is outlined in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006. The role of school council includes setting the long term future for the school and maintaining oversight (not management) of the school's operation. It is not about running the school – that is the job of the principal.
- Developing the strategic plan (the document that tells people what the school wants to achieve in the future and how it plans to get there);
- Approving the annual budget (the financial plan for the calendar year that tells people how the school is going to provide money so it can implement its strategic plan in that year);
- Setting and reviewing policies;
- Developing, reviewing and monitoring both the Student Code of Conduct (how the school expects students to behave, how bullying will be managed and the school's approach to managing student behaviour) and the School Dress Code (this includes how students are expected to dress during school hours including travelling to and from school, if the school has a uniform and what that looks like, and any arrangement with clothing suppliers that the school might enter into);
- Raising money for things that the school needs;
- Making sure the school's grounds and buildings are maintained;
- Entering into contracts for things like cleaning the school or a school council building project;
- Creating interest in the school within the community; and
- Involvement in Principal selection.

What Westall School Council is not responsible for:

- School council does not manage the day to day running of the school. For example, it does not employ teaching staff, decide which classes students will be assigned to, or sort out issues relating to individual teachers and students and/or parents.
- School council does not discuss individual issues relating to teachers, staff or parents – these are management roles and therefore the principal's job.
- School councillors are not appointed to represent specific interest groups or permit special interests to dominate the agenda of the council.
- School council cannot purchase land, buildings or motor cars, and it cannot enter into hire purchase agreements or obtain credit or loans, unless it is given permission by the Minister.

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References:

Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eeo/eeoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf